

Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

Christian Fortitude

WHAT IS YOUR SENSE OF VALUE?

PHILOSOPHY

"BE STILL, AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD"

"RUN TO LEAF"

STRENGTH FROM SECRET SPRINGS

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

THE LESSON OF PATIENCE

Megiddo Message

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A religious magazine, devoted to the cause
of Christ and published for the dissemina-
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MESSAGE will

- Strengthen your faith in the Bible
- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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LETTERS

Joy in Sorrow

Dear Christian Friends,

I have been a reader of the MESSAGE
ever since 1929. This year makes thirty
years and I still love it as much as ever.
It is a soul saver and helps one to under-
stand the Word of God.

My eyes are hardly dry from tears since
my husband passed away. I read and we
talked every day on the wonderful things
of God, but our Lord has promised to wipe
them all away. You see, dear ones, the
MESSAGE is indeed a joy to my soul. It is
just like taking a journey down through one
of God's beautiful gardens of love and
peace. When I read it, I intend to go on
sowing the precious seed wherever I can.

Poplar Bluff, Mo.

Mrs. V. W.

Learning Happiness

Dear Sister,

Since I have been getting the MESSAGE
and letters, you dear sisters are so kind to
write, I have really learned so much how
to be really happy.

As it used to be, if things did not go as
planned or as I wanted them to go, old
anger would rise, then angry and bad feel-
ings set in, but since I have learned how to
really control anger and temper, I can really
be happy.

No one really knows how to be happy
until he strives to walk in the strait and
narrow way and be contented with all of
God's wonderful blessings.

Kinards, S. C.

Mrs. E. C.

Christian's Life not Imitation

Dear Maranatha Sister,

"Big pleasures and great happiness are
but the consummation of many little pleas-
ures and deeds of righteousness and kind-
ness bound together, as a loaf of bread is
composed of many crumbs." We always
get great satisfaction of joy and happiness
in the "Quiet Hour of Communion and
praise to our Maker" for the many bless-
ings and riches of life. We must keep up
our faith and courage—interest in this
wonderful Truth at full strength—and at
all times.

A true Christian's life is not an imi-
tation, but if we wish to be always happy,
it is a reproduction of the life and example
of Christ. This takes steady watching, great
courage to "live above the world." Every
day we should feel:

"Each morning as I rise, I say
This is a clean, new, holy day;
A leaf out of the Book of Life,
May I write on it doing right.
I'll give good measure, running o'er,
I'll go the second mile, and more,
I'll prove His precepts all are true;
All that the Master saith I'll do.
Then at the close of each glad day
With watchfulness, I'll kneel and pray."

Yorkville, N. Y.

M. M. N.

Christian Fortitude

TO BE A SON of the high and lofty God is a position which each one should longingly desire. Should we so progress or advance in this world as to hold the highest station, and have all the wealth that we could possibly use, it would be but for a short space of time. Riches, fame and glory in this life pass like a vapor, only a flitter and they are gone, forever gone!

We have entered into this race, and we must make the most of our opportunity; we must make the very most of our time. Let us seek to obtain this "like precious faith"; grasp it, press it to our hearts, that we may be able to believe these great things and work with force and strength, otherwise we will never, no never escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. How many, from this time on, are willing to say, "Anything, anywhere, Lord, for Thee"? How many will say, "Not my will, but Thy will be done"? But it seems at the present time we turn it around and say (by our actions at least) "Not Thy will, but *mine* be done."

If we could only realize that this leads us to destruction! It seems that it would cause a halt, a right-about face and a quickening in our pace. Knowing what this life, with its trials and sorrows is, it seems as though we would try to escape the pain and sorrow and aspire to something higher, strive to reach a plane where sorrow never comes. But we can never reach this peaceful clime unless we have these things abounding in us. Unless these things are in us and abound, we are blind and we know what becomes of the blind. They pass into darkness forever.

Besides all this, "add to your faith, virtue" (or courage). This is not worldly courage, but a fortitude that will enable us to do what God has commanded. We shall be "weighed in the balance and found wanting," if we lack the fortitude to keep His commandments.

The meaning of the word fortitude is courage; "a steadfast and unbroken spirit; resolute endurance." It is defined as "strength of mind to endure unflinching pain, adversity or peril. Fortitude might be termed 'still courage,' or enduring courage." The Christian's fortitude, then, is spiritual strength and firmness.

The Scriptures are vocal on this true fortitude which we must acquire. We read in Heb. 2:1, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." Not only give Christian heed, but earnest heed, and more earnest heed; still, or enduring courage, fortitude. I Cor. 15:58 describes still or enduring courage: "be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." And Paul, in one trenchant statement in his letter to his son Timothy, covers this fortitude: "Thou therefore my son endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Tim. 2:3).

Jesus was our Example, and He showed us the pattern of endurance which we must copy. Let us read something directly from Him about fortitude. "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved"

(Matt. 24:12, 13). To endure to the end one needs spiritual fortitude or endurance. We are by nature prone to be double-minded, to halt between two opinions. We want to serve both God and mammon. We may be alive and alert in the spiritual life one day, with our faces set like a flint, for the Kingdom, and perhaps the next day filled with doubt and a feeling of despair. Brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Christian fortitude is indicated as the essential element

Christian Fortitude, Fundamental

in Nahum 2:1, "He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: keep the munition, watch the way, make thy loins strong, fortify thy power mightily." The enemy is always confronting us as long as we live. We shall never get away from the problem of "self" until we receive the crown of life.

Romans 2:7 stresses the need for fortitude, still courage, continuity of action: "To them who by a patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." The apostle James adds his testimony: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (1:12). These texts show us the strength and courage that we, as Christians, must have at all times if we want the future honor, the glory, the eternal life.

But do we want it?

That is why we are here; that is why we are doing the things that we are doing; that is why we are giving up the things of the world and of the flesh; but in order to gain the great reward that God has offered, we must also have the patient continuance in well doing, the determination to hold on whatever may come. And if doing all this, we demonstrate that we have the fortitude that distinguishes the true followers of Christ.

There is something in II Peter 1 about moral fortitude. There are additions to be made, and to be on the safe side we must be making them daily. "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:5-8). The Emphatic Diaglott, a word for word translation from the Greek, introduces the word fortitude: "Using all diligence, superadd to your faith fortitude."

This is very plain. Fortitude or courage is the first thing to add when we acquire a knowledge of God's Word. It is "one of the cardinal virtues." We have to add courage to do what God requires of us. It is not physical courage, or courage in secular or temporal affairs. To have this noble courage, we must divest ourselves of the very thing which the world considers indispensable to the courageous person. We must divest ourselves of stubbornness and big-headedness, and be like our Master:

firm, yet meek, and kind upon every occasion.

There are people who think that fortitude and courage mean a manifestation of temper. A man attending this church once said "I do not see how one could retain his individuality and always keep his patience." He thought that in order to show fortitude and courage he must become angry if the situation seemed to demand it. But that is exactly the opposite of what the Bible teaches. To have and display the spiritual strength to do one's duty by not getting angry, requires much more courage than it does to become angry—it is a splendid kind of courage that exalts its possessor to the high standard of Christ.

What did Paul say to his countrymen in Acts 23? "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Paul did not become angry but calmly told the facts in the case. He had godly fortitude. What happened when Paul arose to speak in his own defense? The high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to "smite him on the mouth." If Paul's courage had been of a worldly sort, this would have aroused his anger. But instead, what did he say to the high priest? "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" Yes, he said, You go against yourself. He did not speak in impatience, but he spoke the truth with firmness.

Christian Fortitude in Action

We have an example of this splendid fortitude as practiced by our Master, as recorded in Matthew 23. He had occasion to denounce the wicked, hypocritical Pharisees. And what He said to them was justifiable and true. His words to them were not spoken in malice or hate, or with any thought of revenge for their refusing to accept of His teachings. He called them hypocrites, whited sepulchres, serpents, generation of vipers, blind guides. He said, "Ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess." And when Jesus spoke these words He undoubtedly knew that the high priests were plotting to take His life; still He had the courage to speak the truth.

Paul and Silas showed true Christian fortitude when, confined in prison, they sang praises to God at midnight so that the other prisoners heard them.

When Joshua, Moses' successor, was about to take over the leadership of God's people after the death of Moses he needed fortitude or courage. He was commanded by the Eternal: "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Joshua 1:7, 8).

Here is godly fortitude and the formula for developing it: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein." If we do this, God's strength will be ours.

We could name other Bible characters who manifested great strength of character. Stephen showed great cour-

age in denouncing his countrymen as "stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears," when he knew how enraged they were and the danger of their taking his life. It took courage for Queen Esther to go before King Ahasuerus when the wicked Haman pushed against the Jews to destroy them. In doing this she took her life in her hands.

One outstanding example of courage is found in I Kings 22. It was at the time when Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, was about to join in with the wicked Ahab, king of Israel to battle against Ramoth-gilead. They chose to inquire of the Lord whether or not they should be successful in battle. After four hundred of King Ahab's spurious prophets assured them of victory, Jehoshaphat requested that they inquire of a prophet of the Lord. Micaiah was consulted, and he was not afraid to speak in opposition to the word of the four hundred false prophets.

Elijah the prophet showed much fortitude at Mt. Carmel. It is one of the grandest scenes portrayed in Biblical history. There were four hundred fifty prophets of Baal and four hundred prophets of Ashtoreth directed by the wicked king Ahab who was backed up by his abominable wife, Jezebel. One man against eight hundred and fifty! That took unshakable courage and fortitude.

It takes courage to speak like the Bible and do our duty. No wonder we are told to add courage to our faith. The first characteristic in the category is courage. No other characteristic can be obtained without it; thus it is necessary to have it first in the category for us to be prepared to carry out these things.

Christian Fortitude: its Personal Application

The one place where godly fortitude is most needed is in crying against ourselves. We shall need fortitude continually in order to demand of ourselves a constant growth in the divine life. There is not a day nor hour of our life that evil would not creep in if we would let it.

We read in Proverbs 14:7, "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge." This certainly requires a high type of courage because to deliberately withdraw from a person is very apt to arouse his displeasure. This we naturally seek to avoid. Another command which cannot be complied with without Christian fortitude is the command in II Cor. 6:17, "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." It takes much courage to come out from the world in everything: in dress, in speech, in action, in desire. Another command is found in Isaiah 52:11, "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch not unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." That shows what it is to have fortitude in crying against ourselves.

Another command is found in Prov. 1:10, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." It is a big work to always be ready to say "no" when some one entices us, and especially when we allow ourselves to be enticed by some evil. It takes a great amount of strength. There is a command in Jesus' last message to mankind that to comply with will require large additions of courage. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). It takes courage to come out of Babylon completely.

It requires courage to bridle the tongue so we will speak only such words as can be spoken to the glory of God. The apostle James says: "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (1: 26). Courage is needed to be able to reprove another, and much courage is needed to accept reproof in good grace and profit by it. The Lord pleads with us: "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom He delighteth" (Prov. 3: 11, 12). That comes very close home. This takes the greatest amount of courage because naturally we do not like to be told of our faults.

The apostle Peter had a mighty struggle to add Christian fortitude, but he did it. And what advice does he give? "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." We need continuous courage and fortitude to be able to stand against the enemy that is always present.

Until we get into this condition we are on slippery ground. It is a great work, but God asks us to take only one step at a time, but that one must be right; then lift our other foot and put it in the same direction, and we will progress, will be lifted higher, and soon the summit will be reached. We must long for the rod of correction so the summit of the mountain of His holiness can be attained.

The Christian's Fortitude, His Mark

Now is the time for us to take heed so that we may be ready. When that time comes, all the wicked inhabitants of the earth are going to be destroyed; but God's house will expand and fill the whole earth. Expansion is the everlasting plan of God, an enlarging and spreading outward and which will last and go on for eternity. Blessed be God! When that time comes, the little "stone" will be cut out and spread, but there will be no loss of life on God's side. The voice of His Words are like the voice of a multitude, the one hundred and forty-four thousand. My! will we not rejoice if we are a part of that number? We have never experienced joy like that will be. It will be a wonderful time. The shouts of the future will amount to something then.

Brethren, let us be men of nerve, and stand up for our nation. Never surrender to the foe, stand up against all odds; have fortitude, for God will be with us. Let us never prove a traitor, never turn our back to the foe. How much we should be able to stand to obtain an incorruptible crown! If we stay in the strong tower there will be no danger.

How thankful we should be to God that we have had these wonderful things dug out for us and all we have to do is to go over and over them to keep them in memory. We have this cool water so we can drink of it on a hot day. We will not drink unless we are thirsty. Every one who is thirsty will come and drink. We can also have the "sincere milk of the word," and it will cause a growth if we have a desire for it.

Every one who gains the kingdom must lose the whole head; they will have the courage to join those stalwart souls whom John saw under the altar (Rev. 20: 4; 6: 9), have their own wills, minds and desires severed entirely,

put them under the altar of truth and become a new creature, new through and through.

We shall be longing to have a heart whiter than snow. It will be our earnest anxiety to get a heart clean in His eyesight. Paul tells us that we cannot do the things that we would, or the things we used to do, when we sever the head. We have another work to do; our ways are different, our thoughts are changed and we are made over. The natural or carnal mind is in opposition to God and must be gotten rid of before we can have the mind of the spirit. A friend always seeks the welfare of the one he is a friend of. If we are a friend of God, we will be all wrapped up in His service. An enemy will serve himself.

In this struggle for life we are to reap all the benefit. It does not increase God's joy or pleasure any. The Almighty is doing it all for our glory and aggrandizement. God, as soon as He sees that we are forsaking our sins, forgives. This is His mercy toward us if we have developed that virtue of Christian fortitude which consists not in the enterprises which the poets call heroic and which are commonly the effects of interest, pride, and worldly honour, but which consist of patience, endurance, long-suffering and firmness; of godliness which marks the Christian men and women as followers of God. His mercy is toward those who fear Him, and to fear Him is to keep His Law; and His Law tells us to remember those who have the rule over us.

May God help those who help themselves is my prayer. Amen.

Probe For The Best

PERHAPS one of the strongest and most effective influences making for noble character is the lurking thought that someone, somewhere, is expecting something worth while of us. If we could trace the circumstances and instances surrounding many of this world's finest achievements we might be surprised to find that the impulse which made them possible lay back of someone's great expectation. It must therefore be an incentive and one of the best things we can do for our friends to let them know by some subtle process that we are looking for them to be noble and heroic. This is one channel through which we may effectively add to the nobility and betterment of life in general. As the world is made up of atoms, so life is made up of little things, and if we contribute our mite with sincerity of purpose, who can say how far-reaching the results may be. If we do our work and live our life under the half-conscious spell of someone's high expectation of us, will it not help very much? And much more if we choose as that someone, the great Idealist Himself who said, "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." He also says, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil." And as an inducement to all such, promises abundant and surpassing all conception are held out, even a name better than that of sons and daughters. Yes, the great Idealist expects great things of us. Who will reach the standard set up?

What is Your Sense Of Value?

HOW WE SHOULD praise and thank God that our eyes were opened to behold the priceless, matchless jewel of Gospel Truth, the pearl of great price; true wisdom who holds in her right hand length of days and in her left hand riches and honor. She will give to all who will embrace her, an ornament of grace and a crown of glory. How much Truth does for us if we allow it to work freely within! It will free us from sin, from self, from sickness, sorrow, pain and death. Its power in a human life cannot be estimated: awakening, cleansing, uplifting, elevating, sanctifying, controlling, enriching until we are made over into new creatures. Is it becoming just such a force in our lives? Do we appreciate this great treasure as we should? Do we fully realize what we have in our possession?

Some years ago a rich woman visiting in Detroit lost a very costly pearl brooch for which her husband had paid thirty thousand dollars. She advertised for its return and offered a liberal reward. The police were notified and the search was on, but the brooch was not recovered. Six years later a woman, toil-worn and humble, entered one of Detroit's jewelry stores with a brooch to be repaired. "I should like to have another pearl put into this," she said, "I want to give the pin to my daughter for a graduation present. Can you match those pearls?" The clerk took the brooch to the repair department. In a few minutes he came back with a startling announcement. "Yes, madam," he said, "we can match those pearls for you; but it will cost you two thousand dollars for the single pearl required." "What?" gasped the woman, "I thought I could get it done for two or three dollars." "These are genuine and costly pearls," replied the clerk. "My! my!" said the woman, "I've been wearing that pin for the past six years to hold my waist together."

Then followed an investigation. She was a wash-woman. On her way to work one morning, she had found the brooch on the street. She thought it pretty, but had no idea of its value. She saw none of the advertisements for its return, and day after day she had been bending over the washtub with thirty thousand dollars' worth of jewelry at her breast. To her the trinket was of little value, and so it would have remained if she had not entered the jewelry store.

So we must have a deep sense of values in regard to the treasure we possess, lest we treat it lightly, and, like the washerwoman, be oblivious to the beauty of the incomparable gem with which we must adorn ourselves now, and ever mindful of and feel our indebtedness to those who have labored for us that we might have this good understanding which is necessary to gain life eternal.

* * * * *

*Anew we pledge ourselves to Thee,
To follow where thy Truth shall lead,
Afloat upon its boundless sea,
Who sails with God is safe indeed.*

Philosophy

"This is a mighty world you're in,
An' so don't spread yourself too thin,"
My wise old father used to say.
Just do your best from day to day;
Make sure of everything you touch
But never undertake too much.
Remember as you go along
To sing a cheerful snatch of song
But be contented if a few
Into their hearts shall welcome you.

Life has its tasks both great and small,
But no one man can do them all.
It's settled by a natural law
How much a willing horse can draw,
And if beyond his strength he tries
A failure, broken-down, he dies.
Some men neglect the little things
To seek the praise which greatness brings
And miss the goal, and in the end
Find they have lost the near-by friend.

No man, however wise and strong,
Can bear the burdens of the throng,
Who seeks to serve too many here
Brings no one happiness and cheer.
And this is also truth, I tell,
Who tries too much does nothing well.
God has assigned us certain tasks
And nothing more of us He asks.
He shall succeed by every test
Who does no more than just his best,

"This is a mighty world you're in,
An' so don't spread yourself too thin";
Be good and brave and kind and true
And serve with faithfulness the few.
Be satisfied to earn the praise
Of those who follow in your ways,
If you bring happiness to them
You need not care what tongues condemn.
This is the test for every man
That he shall do the best he can.

Selected.

"How often do we sigh for opportunities of doing good while we neglect the openings of Providence, in little things, which would frequently lead to the accomplishment of most important usefulness! He who waits to do a great deal of good at once, will never do any. Good is done by degrees."

Waste not so much time in weighing
When and where thou shalt begin;
Too much thinking is delaying,
Rivets but the chains of sin.
He will help thee and provide thee
With a courage not thine own,
Bear thee in His arms, and guide thee,
Till thou learnst to walk alone.

"Be Still, And Know That I Am God"

"BE STILL." How important for us to cease doing the talking in order to be able to hear the words of the Lord! God has spoken to people of all ages in one way or another; but how many have been or are now willing to stop and listen? How many really know God?

If you should ask the man on the street, he would say, "Why sure, I know God!"

But does he?

The apostle John said "He that saith, I know him and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4). And sadly enough, the average man does not want to know God. His own ways and his own thoughts seem pretty good to him, so they must look good to God; and thinking thus, he is content.

But let us stop and consider: Are our own ways and our own thoughts pleasing to God? Are they leading us toward the Kingdom? Be still—and listen to God speaking through Solomon: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 16:25). This does not sound like our own ways will get us very far toward salvation! Our ways and our thoughts must be replaced by God's ways and God's thoughts, for the prophet Isaiah wrote, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts. . . for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (55:7-9).

"Look to yourselves" wrote John. Let us ask ourselves: Do we really know God? Are we showing by our daily lives that we know Him; or are we proving ourselves to be liars before God? If we are constantly thinking our own thoughts, finding our own pleasures, and speaking our own words, we do not know God. And if we do not now know God, He will not know us in the day of our calamity, for He warns: "Because I have called, and ye refused: I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh" (Prov. 1:30). If this be our fate, then we will surely know the hard way that He is God.

Man delights in boasting of what he can do; what he has done; and what he will do—forgetting that without

God to control the universe, he would be powerless to so much as hold his feet upon the ground! Truly, man has put together elements in such a way that all men are afraid of their destructive powers! But from where did he get the elements? "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth." "Hast thou not known?" asks the Prophet, "Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding" (Isa. 40:28). Yes, in comparison to the Almighty, man has created but little—and what little he has been able to do could not have been done without God. Be still—and consider—"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

The Lord has no delight in man's boasting, for through the prophet Jeremiah He warns us not to glory in our wisdom, our might, or our riches; but rather to glory in that we understand and know Him (9:23, 24). And the only way we can get this understanding is by listening to and obeying His words. The Psalmist tells us that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments." The Wise Man further adds that by so doing, length of days, long life and peace shall be given us.

"Be still"—yes, humble yourself before God; listen to His words, for they are spirit and they are life. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time," said the apostle Peter. Humility is a most important virtue, for by it, we are told, come riches and honor and life. And a vital part of humility is that state of humbleness of mind in which we are willing to listen; to sit at the feet of the Master and hear, and then to obey His words.

After Christ has returned and God's new order is established upon earth, then shall be fulfilled the words of Jeremiah the prophet, that "They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." Then shall the man on the street be forced to know God, for he shall hear a voice behind him saying: "This is the way, walk ye in it." Then he shall conform to the divine command: "Be still—and know that I am God."

Come, let us to the Lord our God
With contrite hearts return;
Our God is gracious, nor will leave
The desolate to mourn.
His voice commands the tempest forth,
And stills the stormy wave;
And, though His arm be strong to smite,
'Tis also strong to save.
Long hath the night of sorrow reigned;
The dawn shall bring us light;
Christ shall appear, and we shall rise
With gladness in His sight.

Our hearts, if Christ we seek to know,
Shall know Him, and rejoice;
His coming like the morn shall be,
Like morning songs His voice.
As dew upon the tender herb,
Diffusing fragrance round;
As showers that usher in the spring,
And cheer the thirsty ground;
So shall His Presence bless our souls,
And shed a joyful light;
That hallowed morn shall chase away
The sorrows of the night.

—Sel.

"Run To Leaf"

IN MARK 11: 13 we read of our Lord's coming up to a fig tree which was in full leaf and, when He found no fruit on it—even though "the time of figs was not yet"—cursed it because it bore no fruit and showed no signs of bearing any.

To a gardener the meaning of this strange occurrence is very plain. When a fruit tree hasn't been pruned for a long time, it "runs to leaf," sets little or no fruit. It puts on a big display but produces nothing edible.

Months ago before the sap started rising, gardeners were lopping back their fruit trees and grape vines unmercifully. People came along and said, "What a terrible waste of beautiful branches!" and from his perch in the top of the tree the gardener answered, "no waste, no fruit."

If you watch him you'll notice the gardener cuts out limbs and suckers inside the tree. He's "opening it up" so that the sunlight can penetrate to its heart. There's something else he does—he cuts back branches that rub together.

So with the Christian. Our life must be spent looking to see what useless wood we are going to trim, and trimming it, learning how we can concentrate our energies to fruit bearing rather than leaves, and opening up our hearts so that the Sun of Righteousness may shine in it.

We have been planted in the Lord's vineyard to bear fruit, not leaves only. God has given us His truth, we have it in our possession; but unless we let it become a force in our lives we are allowing our tree to "run to leaf." We must be a doer of the word and not simply a hearer.

We may do much in the Lord's service, we may spread His truth to others by spoken or written word, and to the casual eye our tree looks beautiful, tall and stately, full of lovely branches and beautiful leaves, but this is not all that the Lord wants. He is looking for fruit.

Let us look at our tree with a critical eye and cut away these superfluous branches which cause it to "run to leaf." They are excess branches and are sapping away the strength that is necessary to set buds, blossoms, and finally fruit. When these are cut away we shall find that the tree has been opened up and the sun can penetrate to the heart, thus making it possible for any fruit that is borne to be exposed to the sunshine of God's truth and thus become fully ripened.

Have you ever seen a branch that is deformed and sometimes even broken off by another branch rubbing it as it sways back and forth in the wind? As the gardener works to cut off branches that are rubbing together, so we must cut away all such causes for friction from our spiritual tree. For as long as there are any conflicting branches we will not produce the best of fruit. We must decide which branch is of the least value and cut it entirely away. If the fruit of patience is to be borne to perfection, impatience, wrath, and anger must be severed. If we want faith to produce abundantly, we cannot allow unbelief to be rubbing against it. So likewise we cannot expect humility to be highly productive with pride trying to bar its growth. Check the branches on

your tree carefully, and relentlessly prune everything that is hindering the growth of the more desirable. Do not fear to prune severely as the Master has commanded. He knows what is necessary to produce an abundance of giant size, first quality fruit.

Let us for a moment again consider the case of Jesus cursing the fig tree. With His supernatural power, it would have been easy for him to say, "Fig tree, be full of fruit," and instantly it could have been bending beneath a weight of figs, but He did not. He wanted it to bear fruit of itself. Perhaps He did this to show that we are free moral agents to bear, or not to bear fruits, just as we choose. The Lord does not wave a wand over us and say, "Be good," and have the result immediately follow; if He did there would be no virtue to us. Instead He wants us to bear fruit of our own free will and not by compulsion. If we want to let our tree "run to leaf," that is our privilege; but we need never expect the Master Inspector to be pleased with our result.

Soon the Master Gardener will come seeking the harvest from the trees in His garden. Will He smile and nod with approval as He looks upon our tree or will He say, "This tree has 'run to leaf' and shows no signs of ever bearing fruit, uproot it and cast it out to be burned, for the time has come that only fruit bearing trees can remain in this, my garden."

It takes longer to apologize than to injure.

He that always complains is never pitied.

Good will is the one asset that competition cannot undersell or destroy.

Pardon is the most glorious kind of revenge.

To profit from good advice requires more wisdom than to give it.

Be not the first to quarrel, nor the last to make it up.

Great trials are a necessary preparation for great duties.

You cannot raise a man up by calling him down.

When a man is wrong and won't admit it, he always gets worse.

Wish not so much to live long, as to live well.

If you listen to the neverdo's, it's never done.

It is not trying and failing that proves the mettle of a man, but his failing to try.

In making a living today, many no longer leave room for life.

Good workers are made, not born.

Why is it that many of us are so prone to emphasize the unpleasant, the disagreeable things of life?

Instead of putting such great stress upon the unpleasant things of life, why not turn about and form a habit of emphasizing the beautiful things, the things of delight; the happy pleasant experiences that are yours? It is so easy for us to emphasize the things that seem unpleasant, but many times we could make them pleasant if we would only change our mental attitude toward them, consider them from a different standpoint.

When one makes preparations for failure, he fails.

Strength From Secret Springs

A LONG THE borders of many European countries, there are to be found today, many castles and towers in various stages of preservation. Though many are in ruins, some are still standing in their beauty and grandeur.

Several hundred years ago, there was continual strife among peoples who lived close to the borders. As, for instance, England and Scotland were at bitter enmity. The English were being constantly attacked by the Scots who stole their crops and their cattle. They raided and plundered without mercy. To protect themselves from their enemies, the rich landowners built great towers and castles on their borders. In an effort to defend themselves, they lived in these fortresses much of the time.

Some of these towers had secret springs that provided the occupants with a constant flow of fresh water. Those who were not fortunate enough to have a well or spring within their tower, had to pipe water from wells some distance away from the buildings. When the invaders came, they were shrewd enough to cut the pipeline and then wait outside the fortress. In time, the people within died of thirst and starvation. Thieving bands would then swarm into the buildings, looting and carrying away all valuables and leaving ruins behind them.

Those who had a secret spring in their tower were unconquerable. The enemy could not harm them. Many such fortresses still stand today as a reminder of how important it is to have a secret spring in one's possession.

God has provided us with a strong tower (Prov. 18: 10). It is a God-given place of shelter and refuge in trying times, and a mighty fortress in time of trouble. Here, in the Tower of Truth, God has set apart a people for Himself (Psa. 4: 3). If we stay within its protecting walls, we shall find it a haven of peace and rest.

The loving invitation from our Heavenly Father has always been and still is, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee"—shut yourselves inside. You see, the purpose for running into this tower is to separate ourselves from worldly ways, folly and vice. We are not safe until we shut the doors about us; shut out the harmful thoughts and hurtful acts. All that will take away our eternal life must be shut out of our lives. God's chosen people must be shut-out from the world but shut-in with God. Being secure on the inside, we shall be safe on every side, if God is with us.

There is no promise of lasting security for us, unless we discover that secret spring that will give us eternal life. Jesus was acquainted with it, for He said, "... but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." To Jesus, it was an ever-flowing fountain of Heavenly Wisdom. It was His drink, His meat and Heavenly Manna. He resorted to it often and found comfort and solace in the darkest hours of His trials. It was a secret spring the world knew nothing of.

Many Christians in the world today, start out enjoying the protection of the tower, but do not take the trouble to search for the secret spring on their premises. They prefer to pipe in running water from the outside. They lose sight of the fact that piped-in waters are

invariably polluted by error and tradition. It makes them sick from head to foot. It brings on double-mindedness and soon they become weary in well-doing. Not drawing sustenance from the life-giving waters, the world outside begins to look attractive to them, more so than the rightful pleasures that God offers. Blind to all danger, they open wide their doors and gaze wistfully beyond the fortified walls to the broad highways and the pleasure-seeking throngs. Little do they realize that they are making themselves open targets for the darts and slings of the thieving marauder—that enemy which is ready to take their eternal life. Oh, the enemy is crafty, subtle and shrewd! He does his deadly work and bides his time. He is good at waiting for his prey.

Without a secret spring to resort to, the occupants cannot hold the fortress for any great length of time. Sooner or later they die in trespasses and sins. Then it is that the enemy takes over. He comes in to plunder, to loot and to devour. And thus, sad to say, the professing Christian's life stands in ruins because he had no inner spring to draw from in time of trouble. But, we have that secret spring to draw from. Our enemies shall wait in vain for us to die in sin. Drawing and drinking deeply from its crystalline purity, we are growing stronger and stronger. Sustained and nourished by those life-giving waters, we can hold on indefinitely. Our spiritual health being vigorous, there will be no danger of our getting run-down in good works. Day by day, we shall become more Christ-sufficient, invincible, well established to endure unto the end, unconquerable.

God's people in all ages had a secret spring to resort to. It was their chief recourse, their source of aid in times of danger. They availed themselves of its secret power and obtained unmeasurable endurance. No enemy could out-wait them. They had a direct channel open to the springs of God. If availing ourselves of that secret power, how great is our moral strength! How great is our endurance! How long we can go on in an atmosphere of discouragement, ingratitude, apparent scorn, disdain and even open contempt!

It is good practice to measure the depth, the breadth and the length of the Christian virtues that we possess. How long before irritability begins? How soon before we get discouraged? How swiftly do we exhaust our store of long-suffering? How well can we take unjust criticisms? Can we give out kindness for the bitter word? Can we remain happy under correction? Or is it true of us that our patience is soon spent; we are easily ruffled; we have no tolerance?

External circumstances will not affect the Christian who is drawing deep from the fountain of living waters. We have all met the individual whose skies are continually overcast by sickness, death or financial difficulties. We hear people saying of such a person, "How does he do it? Adversity never touches him. The cloudy surroundings never faze him. His disposition remains cheery and his hopes are bright. His endeavors? They are persistent. What is his staying power? What else but the secret spring from within. He has tapped the hidden reserves of God's power to man. His faith is unconquerable!"

Meditations

On the Word

"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." (III John 11).

To follow the evil rather than the good is a trait that is fully developed in the most of us, therefore it is a weakness we must constantly guard against. The youth in his early teens thinks it is smart to smoke cigarettes, he sees many of the older men smoking around him; of course he sees others who do not smoke but he instinctively follows the bad example rather than the good.

There is scarcely an avenue of human experience where this tendency is not apparent. Take, for example, one's manner of speech. The child during its formative years may be subjected to the influence of people who are refined and mannerly, and also with others who are careless about their use of words. The lowering trends of recent years is mute evidence to their reactions to these two influences. Men in public life today will employ vulgarity in their public utterances, and no one thinks anything of it; while a few generations ago they would have been severely censured.

This trend is also visible in the lowered moral standards of the hour, the carelessness in dress and demeanor, so especially marked during the summer months. It is so much easier to go with the crowd, to follow the line of least resistance, than it is to staunchly hold out for a principle and show the good example that will lead onward and upward to God. It is no wonder the Apostle, foreseeing that in these last days perilous times would come, that evil men and seducers would wax worse and worse (II Tim. 4: 1-4), warned us to "come out from the world," to be "a separate and peculiar people, zealous of good works," to "touch not the unclean thing," knowing that "evil communications corrupt good manners."

One of the ordinances given by Moses to the Children of Israel in the Wilderness bears directly on this matter of not following an evil example. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment." (Ex. 23: 2).

The thought that "he that doeth good is of God" should especially attract our interest. If a man embarks upon an untried business enterprise, he likes to feel he is being backed up by someone of experience and financial strength, by one of proven worth and ability that he can look to as an adviser and friend. But what peace of mind could any earthly friend bring to us as compared with the assurance that we are of God, that He knows and recognizes us, and will always be our Friend and Protector. In whatever way our wealthy and influential friend might assist us, that assistance would be of short duration, for it could last no longer than our short span of life. While if God is our strength, and underneath us are the "everlasting arms," lasting peace and security can be ours! He it is who "maketh the seven stars and Orion" (Amos 5: 8). He it is who "made the earth, and created man upon it" (Isa. 45: 12), who giveth to us life and breath and all

things. He it is who possesses the power to "turn the shadow of death into the morning," and in the glad Day of the Resurrection give us the victory over death and the grave so we can shout triumphantly, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor. 15: 55).

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8: 31). Surely, to have God for us in the Day of final reckoning, when He shall "rend the foundations of wickedness and destroy every oppressor together"—to have an assurance like this is well worth our while to now cease imitating the evil and ever follow that which is good.

"He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." One who has had the eyes of his understanding enlightened to behold God's goodness and mercy, if he then rejects that chance and persists in going his own way, he demonstrates he has never known or recognized God, and as such we may be certain God will never recognize him.

We might bear the outward signs of acquaintance with God, attend church regularly, be charitable, and lend a helping hand in many worthy causes; yet if our heart is not right with God, if we are merely acting the part, doing our alms to be seen of men as did the Pharisees in Jesus' day, and are not willing to have our faults and besetments uncovered, the hidden motives of our hearts revealed, we are still doing evil, and do not really know God.

Paul longed to know God in hope of the ultimate result, salvation. Not only did he yearn to know God but he was determined to make that acquaintance genuine by meeting every condition required. His words in Phil. 3: 7-11 set a high standard for every aspirant to the full reward of eternal life: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, . . . but . . . the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Life is a fact. This in turn calls for sustaining motivation.

If, to the exclusion of God, the cares of this life are our chief concern, then what are we above the animals? Do they not live to eat, to sleep, to gratify their natural desires? But this course has never led to durable satisfactions in life.

We need a work fit to live for, and for this the fulfilling of our temporal duties alone are not enough; nothing less than a life dedicated to God's high ideals will do.

Without a sound, abiding faith in God, life is mean. Without pure and lofty aspirations, it is shallow.

Without sustaining motives, life will in the end be for us but a dismal failure.

Christians and camels receive their burdens kneeling.

Questions and Answers



Who was the Anointed Cherub of Ezekiel 28, who was upon the mountain of God?

The Jehovah's Witnesses and others take the position that the prince of Tyre referred to in Ezekiel 28 represents an immortal devil who once was a beautiful angel, but was ejected from his heavenly abode or high position because he would not co-operate in the service of the Eternal. But this thesis is purely conjecture.

Now for verse 7 of Revelation 12. When this text speaks of a war in heaven it is in no way qualified as being the heaven where the Almighty dwells, but rather refers to the Battle of Armageddon, the coming conflict between Christ and the powers of earth at His second advent. That war has not been fought yet but is to be fought in the political heavens, a conflict between the powers of man and the rapidly expanding powers of earth's new Ruler. "Michael," Christ, "the Chief One," and His angels, or saints (Ps. 149:9); and the "dragon," or powers of darkness, will meet in deadly conflict. During the great Battle of Armageddon existing world powers will be shorn of their authority, the present arrangement of things pass away, and Christ and His co-rulers shall ascend into absolute power.

The idea of turmoil, or any warlike gestures, in heaven where God dwells, or in any area where the Eternal's work of creation is complete, is fantastic and incompatible with reason. It does not agree with the clearly stated qualities of the Creator. "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it" (Eccl. 3:14).

Once an individual is saved he is saved for time and eternity. Grouping the body of faithful believers under the general term, "Israel," Isaiah declares: "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end" (Isa. 45:17). If, however, the theory of angels rebelling, and falling from their high estate, is provable, then no person receiving that magnificent boon has any assurance of its permanence. If even once in ten million ages the ugly head of dissension could be raised in the realms of the blest, what assurance would there be that we ourselves—if so highly favored as to be among the saved—might not be among the unfortunate number to be caught in the cross current, and be swept from our poise by that rebellious group?

Isaiah 35:10 reads: "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Then, if in some remote age that joy and tranquillity could be punctuated by subversive elements usurping authority, then the Almighty told us an untruth.

Describing conditions that will prevail upon earth when God's work here is complete, King David, speaking for the Eternal, said: "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord" (Ps. 101:7, 8).

In Rev. 21:27, referring to the heavenly Jerusalem, God's finished handiwork upon earth, we read: "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth,

neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." Where then did this rebellious angel or devil come from? The Great Eternal, knowing the end from the beginning, is not so shortsighted as to perpetuate the existence of beings who later on will rebel against divine authority and desecrate His heavenly abode.

Believers in the theory of a war in heaven try to read that idea into Ezekiel 28, but not a word in the chapter supports their claim. Tyre was a place, a city. The whole of the 27th chapter of Ezekiel is devoted to picturing it, its industries, its traffic, its trade, its wealth. Its downfall also is predicted. Tyrus (Tyre) was situated on the shores of the Mediterranean. It was an ancient maritime city of Phoenicia. It was from Tyre that King Solomon purchased timber to build the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, and hired skilled craftsmen to assist in the construction work. Jesus Himself mentioned Tyre, then long past the zenith of its glory, as an example.

This prince of Tyrus was literally a man, the same as Lucifer was a man, the king of Babylon. Isaiah 14:4 and 16 are explicit; "Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! . . . They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this *the man* that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?" The reading of Ezek. 28:2 is very similar: "Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God; because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a *man*, and not God." He was a *man*, not God, and not an erstwhile angel, or immortal devil, either.

In an effort to establish the theory of fallen angels some Bible students spiritualize Ezekiel 28. Obviously parts of that chapter are figurative, using the prince of Tyre to represent a class of people, but definitely not to support the theory of an immortal devil. Verse 13 states this individual or class of individuals had been in Eden, the spiritual garden of God. They were those who had covenanted to work in the vineyard of the Lord and failed to keep their vow; hence represent the unfaithful.

Verse 14 indicates this representative individual had been upon the holy mountain of God, that is he had attempted to live the higher life, but nowhere is it stated that he had ever been in heaven where God and the angels abide.

THE world has not lacked for men of good will. The whole of the organized Christian religion has been avowedly devoted to the universal brotherhood of man for two thousand years. Many quasi-religious and fraternal organizations exist for similar objectives. For centuries men of good will in all walks of life have struggled for harmony, peace and equilibrium in the midst of discord, war and imbalance.

It is not good will that Western civilization lacks. It is rather the means, the tools, the know-how to make effective our good will. The road to war, like the road to poverty, is strewn with the wrecks of good intentions. —F. K. Berrien

The Lesson of Patience

Youth is impetuous and eager. A goal ardently longed-for must be quickly won or life's sky is clouded with disappointment. Patience to wait the moment of fulfillment for cherished hopes and dreams is a lesson hard to learn.

Nature is an object-lesson of infinite patience. The giant trees are content to wait the slow growth of years to attain their majestic stature. It is the annuals that quickly spring up and as quickly die; from the acorn to the full-grown oak measures a lifetime. The century-old tree is a monarch of the forest and seems to smile at the puny haste of mortals.

When winter locks the world in ice and snow, the seeds and roots buried deep within the bosom of earth wait the call of the springtime. The occasional warm, sunny days in midwinter do not tempt the eager flowers to spring up to chill and certain death. Neither do the birds come from the Southland till the proper season. God puts an instinct within the birdlings that tells them when it is time to seek their nesting-places in the distant North. With patience they await the season when their longings to spread their wings in homeward flight may be satisfied.

When the supreme moment has come—when, sitting on the nest, the mother bird feels the eggs beneath her warm breast, she sits contentedly until the fullness of time, when the pearly prisons will open in response to the peck of tiny beaks and the little ones will nestle confidently under the shelter of her wings. She does not peck at the shells in her haste to see the baby nestlings, thus blasting all her hopes. The birds give their human companions many sweet lessons in patience.

Life's hard discipline is to teach us patience. We see a beautiful old age where the lesson has been well learned. The earlier in life this lesson is mastered, the greater the peace and joy in living and the greater the record of good accomplished.

God's plans, like lilies white, unfold.
We may not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.

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